

NSC BRIEFING

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20 April 1955

**THREATS IN GERMANY**

- I. While USSR dangles treaty "carrot" before eager Austrians' eyes, the Communist "stick" is being brandished at German cousins.
  - A. Since 1 April, East Germans have resumed pressures, both physical and psychological, on West Berlin.
  - B. Seem to be preparing to seal off West Berlin from East Germany.
- II. Added motive for isolation West Berlin may be Communist desire for improved internal security in East Germany, now that conscription is imminent.
  - A. Would prevent West Berlin being haven for draft-dodgers, dissidents.
  - B. It would make more difficult [REDACTED] 25X1C
- 25X1C [REDACTED]
- III. First direct harassment came on 1 April, when East Germans jumped the tolls paid by trucks moving between Federal Republic and West Berlin.
  - A. Average toll (based on load weight) went from \$5 to \$50 per trip.
    1. This is an impossible fee for small trucker to pay.
  - B. Both West Berlin and Bonn have voted interim subsidies (total: \$360,000) but fund will soon be exhausted, perhaps by next week.

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C. West German attempts to negotiate toll reduction have snagged on technicians level.

1. East German demands that issue be discussed at ministerial level are seen as device to assert sovereignty.
2. West Germans have refused ministerial negotiations and, as reprisal, have decided on slow-down of international trade deliveries.

IV. First psychological attack came on 12 April, when East Germans, in announcing arrest of 521 "Western spies," threatened West Berliners with "inconveniences" unless action taken against Western intelligence activities in city.

A. Figure presumably includes arrests for past 3-4 years.

1. Of 25 "spies" named in announcement, several are known to have been arrested in '53.

B. [REDACTED] 25X1C

V. At present, Berlin seething with mixture of rumors and possibly credible reports of further East German isolation plans. Most credible of these include: (NOTE: Await cable confirmation before using A, B and C).

- A. Border police has reportedly been strengthened.
- B. A plan to cut East German communications and rail links through West Berlin.
  1. East Germans may be preparing to sever elevated lines through West Berlin.

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- C. Plans to increase restrictions on movements of persons across Berlin borders.
- D. West Berlin Land Labor Office reports that 3,000 West Berliners employed in East Berlin have been fired in last two months: officials fear that remaining 12,000 will soon be dismissed.

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